

DFC CO 07



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

1611
Ser N00L/ 163
10 DEC 18

SECOND ENDORSEMENT of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ltr 1611 Ser N00L/138 of
5 Oct 18

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

To: Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS -83)

Subj: DETACHMENT FOR CAUSE ICO CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) USN

Encl: (2) CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) USN statement of 20 Nov 18

1. Forwarded.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Copy to:
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

1611
12 Oct 2018

FIRST ENDORSEMENT of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ltr 1611 Ser N00L/138 of 5 Oct 18

From: CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) USN
To: Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-83)
Via: (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Subj: DETACHMENT FOR CAUSE ICO CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) USN

1. On 10 October 2018, I received the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ltr 1611 of 5 October 2018, requesting my detachment for cause, and I understand the request may be filed in my official record.
2. I am aware of the contents of MILPERSMAN 1070-020 and I do desire to make a written statement.
3. I further understand that I have 40 calendar days from this date, until 19 November 2018, to submit my statement. If I fail to submit a statement in that period of time, it will be treated as a waiver of that right. I understand that any statement I make must be couched in temperate language, be confined to the pertinent facts, and not impugn the motives of others or make countercharges.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

1611
Ser N00L/ 138
5 OCT 18

From: (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)
To: Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS -83)
Via: (1) CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)
(2) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Subj: DETACHMENT FOR CAUSE ICO CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) USN

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1611-020

Encl: (1) Command Investigation dtd 29 August 2018 (without enclosures)

1. Per reference (a), I request that CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) be detached for cause from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) by reason of my loss of confidence in CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ability to command.

2. CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) assumed command of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2017. I relieved CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) of command on 30 August 2018. As fully detailed in enclosure (1), I relieved CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) not for one incident or one instance of poor performance but because he did not demonstrate the skills, judgement, and leadership I expect from a Major Commander. Upon assuming command, CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was on notice that he needed to address crew concerns about scheduling, communication, and trust. Instead of attacking these issues, he exacerbated these problems with a leadership style that did not utilize his XO and COB properly, was bereft of clear guidance, and eroded trust in his command. Finally, after learning of potential misconduct by members of his crew, he made feeble attempts to investigate the misconduct and through his lack of communication further eroded trust in his command.

3. Although CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) failed in key aspects as Command Officer (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) those failures do not rise to a level that required disciplinary action; I view this as case of poor performance and not personal misconduct. I do not believe that CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) should be required to show cause for retention in the naval service. He is currently not on a promotion list.

4. My point of contact for this matter is (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Judge Advocate, CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) He may be reached at (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) or by email at (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Copy to:
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

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20 November 2018

From: CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)
To: Commander, Naval Personnel Command (PERS-83)
Via: (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Subj: DETACHMENT FOR CAUSE STATEMENT

Ref: (a) Command Investigation dtd 29 August 2018
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ltr Ser N00/161 dtd 30 Aug 18
(c)(b)(6), (b)(7)(c) ltr Ser N00L/137 dtd 5 Oct 18
(c)(b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 017 Inspector General Hotline Complaint (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)
(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

Encl: (1) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) DEOMI Survey summary slides

1. My relief as Commanding Officer of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) on 30 August 2018 is in direct contradiction of all the time and effort that I dedicated to the crew and ship's mission for more than one year. The commitment I always displayed was consistent with my performance during more than (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) of naval service in the submarine force. During each tour in my career, I was lauded for outstanding leadership ability, devotion to the well being and development of Sailors, mission accomplishment, innovative thinking, and compassionate mentorship. These traits were noted by Sailors, peers, supervisors, and teammates. I was the foremost advocate for all Sailors (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and often reminded others to apply the same principle. Despite the circumstances, I remain committed to the U.S. Navy and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) with the same passion and vigor (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) or (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) I was executing my role with the same energy literally until the moment I was relieved and ensured my relief had the turnover needed to take care of the crew. I desire to continue my naval service and maintain the primary and additional qualification designators that I earned.

2. This tour aboard (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) represented one of the most difficult jobs in my career. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) mission is widely acknowledged to be unusually arduous based on being forward deployed for (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) years, an aging platform, remote location for deployed maintenance, special mission set, and long major maintenance periods between deployments. After selecting for Major Command, I was honored to be chosen to lead (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) as I believe there is no better role than commanding a warship at sea. I threw everything into preparing and executing this role, and my wife and children did the same as always. This included once again moving to a new part of the country. While I expected the job to be difficult, the circumstances for (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) proved unique given my relieving as Commanding Officer (CO) immediately following a long Extended Refit Period (ERP). The low operational proficiency level of the crew, significant turnover during the ERP, lack of preparations for the upcoming deployment, and significant ship material problems were some of the key challenges. Additionally, some personnel struggled in their leadership roles. Through all these challenges, I

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believe that the supervisors and entire crew worked extremely hard to prepare, certify, and deploy the ship in a relatively short period following the ERP. We were forced to work through numerous obstacles and did so as a tightly bound crew as noted by several external organizations during the workup, certification events, and deployment. I more thoroughly discuss many of these challenges in this statement and provide only as context. We were prepared for mission operations at the time I was relieved as CO and the crew wanted nothing more than to execute that mission and any other tasking given to us by the operational commander. As a team, we were continuing to work through the difficult problems in concert with maintaining warfighting readiness.

3. Following the completion of the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) directed Command Investigation conducted (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in early August 2018, I was not contacted by any person to discuss the investigation. I was not afforded the opportunity to address, clarify or amplify any aspect of the investigation prior to the investigation report (reference (a)) being published on 29 August 2018 and my relief as Commanding Officer on 30 August 2018. After the investigation team departed the ship, no officer in my operational or administrative chain of command held a discussion with me regarding the investigation. This lack of opportunity to discuss the investigation continued through my being delivered the DFC request in October 2018 and up to the date of this letter.

4. To fully understand the significant work accomplished by the crew during the period from September 2017 to August 2018, it is important to have the context of the many challenges we faced. These influenced many of our decisions and occupied our time and efforts while preparing for and executing an overseas deployment. All of these represent stress upon leadership and the crew while preparing for the first deployment (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) years.

a. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) conducted an Extended Refit Period (ERP) from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to September (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) month ERP was extended several times from the originally scheduled length due to many factors. The ERP involved a period of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) As discussed elsewhere in this statement (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) did not always work well together at many levels, including leadership. The ERP was difficult on the crew based on their own discussions. I heard this frequently during turnover and it was an ongoing theme even as we deployed in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2018. The largest concern expressed by the crew was they believed that their time was not valued during the ERP and they were worked too hard for too long. Many of the supervisors believed that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) received a better deal during the ERP and this was reinforced by the previous CO. We knew that we would need to account for the ongoing dissatisfaction with the ERP during the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and deployment due to the strength of the feelings expressed.

b. The start of sea trials was delayed and the follow-on at-sea period was cut short due to material conditions on the ship. This prevented gaining valuable at-sea proficiency and completing deployment certification events. This resulted in only three weeks of underway time for the crew in an 18 month period. The sea trials and follow-on underway operations were at a basic level due to the lack of crew proficiency. Shortening this underway precluded stepping up

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to intermediate and higher levels of operations. This would exacerbate a challenging situation where a crew is completing a CNO level maintenance availability and then deploying six months later without the benefit of owning the ship to operate and gain proficiency.

c. The initial plan for deployment had us conducting (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2018. At (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was delayed incrementally with material problems, the deployment shifted to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2018. This resulted in a seven month long AHPTP, which is a significant period away from the ship. If we would have been underway as planned in early May 2018, it would represent 25 months with only three weeks underway.

d. Turnover of the crew during the 18 months of ERP was nearly 50%. The proficiency level of the crew entering the AHPTP was at a significantly low level due to lack of training completed during the ERP and basic level of the training that was accomplished. We had to schedule additional training time early in the AHPTP just to establish a required level to commence the actual AHPTP. Additionally, the watch teams and other mission teams were not yet established as they should have been months earlier. The time spent for these important training and team development events was in addition to the significant time required to complete numerous operational and administrative items that were in disrepair at change of command as discussed later in this statement.

e. In order to most efficiently complete the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Certification (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) it was directed that we conduct this onboard (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) after they completed their (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in January 2018. This was definitely efficient for the overall ship, but it required approximately 30 crew members and me to stop AHPTP actions while underway for two weeks. Only limited AHPTP events could be completed during this period.

f. During the AHPTP, the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was completed for our crew with more than 20 additional enlisted (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) This brought the total to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) but there were challenges due to the ongoing lengthy and difficult AHPTP and rapidly approaching deployment.

g. Shortly before we departed for deployment (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) We soon learned that we would be (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in April 2018 and completing extensive EDG repairs vice completing a short Voyage Repair Period (VRP) and getting underway for deployment certifications. Three subsequent EDG casualties due to significant material failures resulted in extensive depot level repairs until July 2018. The high level of stress placed upon the crew was apparent while completing these repairs without the benefit of a full maintenance facility. The shifting of the schedule came incrementally because of the incremental EDG casualties. This caused more stress due to never fully knowing when the underway would occur as we were at the mercy of a long logistics path in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and limitations on maintenance support. The extensive EDG repairs also precluded use of Crew's Mess and full use of the Galley. For long periods, meals

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were delivered to the ship for the duty section and all other personnel took a lengthy bus ride to the base galley. The EDG repairs also created an industrial environment onboard that affected daily life as we were all sleeping onboard.

h. The long delay in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) exacerbated the lack of underway time for the crew. With an underway in mid-July, there was a gap of 27 months between the last deployed underway operations with only three weeks of underway time. The turnover of the crew since the last deployed operations in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2016 was now more than 60% with more than 70% of the crew having no deployment experience. Due to the delays, it would now be more than three months since we completed our Command Training Exercise (CTE) and in-port phase of the Combat Readiness Evaluation (CRE) at TTF in late March 2018. It was necessary for us to mitigate the loss of proficiency by conducting training on the ship for watch teams. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) has no training venues to aid in this plan. I asked the Department Heads and Department Chiefs to develop a reasonable schedule of training events to maintain proficiency during the six to eight week period until underway. This was essential to our success when getting the ship underway and closely followed by deployment certification evaluations and an ORSE. This did prove to be an additional stress to the crew due to the repetitive nature of completing underway training on a moored ship, and the ongoing EDG work with an unknown endpoint. That said, I was proud of the crew for working through the difficult points and the proficiency training was beneficial as we successfully completed underway operations and evaluations.

5. The DFC request, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Command Investigation letter (reference (c)) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Command Investigation letter (reference (b)), and the Command Investigation report (reference (a)) all discuss command climate concerns that existed when I relieved as Commanding Officer on 22 September 2017. During the month preceding my checking aboard, throughout the turnover period of approximately 30 days, and immediately following the change of command, I was never made aware of significant command climate problems that needed to be immediately addressed. The following amplifies the status as I was informed in September 2017 prior to change of command.

a. I was not aware of the Inspector General (IG) complaints (reference (d)) that occurred in August 2017 prior to commencing turnover with CAPT (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). In fact, the first time that I heard of these complaints was during the Command Investigation (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in August 2018 when asked during an interview. The findings and allegations from these August 2017 complaints are used in the 2018 Command Investigation and DFC recommendation as a basis for my having known about existing crew morale conditions at change of command in September 2017.

b. I conducted a thorough turnover aboard the ship commencing in late August 2017. This included extensive discussions with my predecessor and senior leaders. I also conducted discussions with program managers, including the Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) Manager and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Point of Contact (POC).

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None of these turnover interactions included these leaders informing me about IG complaints and investigations in August 2017, despite it being in the immediate past and obviously relevant.

c. I conducted no fewer than 25 sit-down discussions with my predecessor during turnover. He never mentioned the August 2017 IG complaints or any follow-up to the complaints or significant crew morale problems. He generally evaluated the crew morale as better than expected based on the crew having just completed a lengthy and difficult Extended Refit Period (ERP). He stated that shift work and an often-changing schedule were a strain for the crew, but he believed there was little that could have been done to mitigate these based on operational requirements to complete the ERP and sea trials. I specifically recall the discussion because I noted to myself to ensure that a two week post-ERP stand down was included in the upcoming Advanced Home Port Training Period (AHPTP).

d. Prior to Change of Command, I conducted numerous discussions with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership at the Commodore, Deputy and Command Master Chief level. These discussions were at the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) offices in mid-August 2017, at-sea during sea trials, and once again at the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) offices in mid-September. None of these discussions included them informing me about the August 2017 IG complaints or significant crew morale problems. I would have expected that something at the level of IG complaints/investigations would require a mandatory discussion between the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) CO, and PCO.

e. During my turnover discussions with the Executive Officer (XO), Chief of the Boat (COB), Department Heads, and Department Chief Petty Officers (Department Chiefs) in Aug-Sep 2017, nothing was mentioned regarding IG complaints or significant crew morale problems. When the 2017 IG complaints were brought up during the at-sea investigation in August 2018, the XO and COB informed me that they were aware of the complaints, but knew of no report, resolution, or actions that came from these. I asked why they did not inform me during or subsequent to change of command in 2017 and they explained that there had never been formal follow-up to them, possibly only to my predecessor.

f. After the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Command Investigation in August 2018, I asked the XO and Leading Yeoman (LYN) to provide me any materials available about the 2017 IG complaints. They were not able to provide a report or any other substantive documentation about these complaints. I asked the XO to request (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) provide any available documentation or information, but none were provided prior to my relief on 30 August 2018.

6. After a month long turnover period, including approximately 20 days at-sea during post sea trials, I believed that I had a good understanding of the challenges that we faced in the coming months after relieving as Commanding Officer. Discussions with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership, my predecessor, and senior leaders on the ship all pointed at several main points as the priorities and challenges in the near term leading to deployment in early 2018. These included shift from maintenance to operational mindset, AHPTP planning and execution, assisting (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) with ship preparations for their deployment, schedule uncertainty, and pending crew leadership

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changes. None of these leaders listed crew morale as a primary focus and they certainly did not convey to me a sense of immediate action required in this important area. That is not to say that they had no concern for crew morale, only that they believed that morale was in good shape relative to the other more pressing concerns in their minds. I once again emphasize that my predecessor believed that crew morale was better than he expected.

7. The DFC request indicates that my performance throughout eleven months as CO was sub-standard. During this entire period, my crew and I were consistently observed by numerous external organizations. These included (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership and staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership and staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership and staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) staff, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) team, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Certification (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) team. They observed us in-port and at-sea during training, meetings, evaluations, assessments, maintenance, evolutions, and numerous other opportunities. These were conducted during our AHPTP in offices, training rooms, and TTF trainers. They also observed us in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) during the extended VRP and during at-sea operations. At no point during any of these hundreds of interactions did I receive feedback indicating that I was not performing my role as CO adequately.

a. Detachment of Reporting Senior Fitness Report from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Commodore in January 2018 (delivered to me on 2 April 2018) indicated I was an outstanding leader and CO. There were zero negative comments and no feedback was provided orally during a debrief.

b. Periodic Fitness Report from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Commodore in July 2018 included all positive comments on the successful completion of multiple key events and outstanding work that I had done as CO in leading the crew during a challenging AHPTP, extended VRP in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and at-sea period.

c. I never received any negative written correspondence regarding my performance as CO.

d. I never received any negative feedback in oral counseling or other discussions regarding my performance as CO.

e. Numerous discussions with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) staff, and other external organization leaders yielded positive comments regarding the improving performance of the crew and the manner I was deliberately working with the crew to achieve mission readiness and success.

8. With respect to the overall status of the crew and ship at change of command in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2017, my general plan was similar to when I previously relieved as CO and XO. I needed to understand the status of crew, major programs and near-term plan. This included understanding strengths and weaknesses of our teams and individuals. We would then set in-place the plans to make necessary revisions and shore up the areas needing improvement. This is what we initiated

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in late September 2017 as we commenced the AHPTP. I did not dwell on the weak status of many programs and teams discovered during turnover. With the August 2018 Command Investigation placing emphasis on the status of crew morale in August/September 2017, it is pertinent to detail the relatively poor status of major items at change of command in September 2017. In retrospect, the significant amount of time and emphasis placed on correcting these weak areas likely were a major burden on the leaders and entire crew. This potentially deflected away from mounting morale problems that were not as evident during the five day per week AHPTP conducted while not owning the ship. Many of these problems existed for a long period of time and were known by external organizations. My predecessor departed the ship with what appeared to be a good reputation and a high-level award. I discussed these problems with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) at turnover, and the more significant are detailed below.

a. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) were at best adversarial with one another for most of the interactions I witnessed or was provided a brief. It would be easy to attribute this to a long ERP in which the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) were required to aid one another and a building sense of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) getting the better deal. Having commanded another (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) that successfully (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) at my 18 month point, I knew it was likely more complicated. After observing during my turnover period and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in mid-September 2017, I was convinced that the problem was at the senior leadership and specifically with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). They did not like each other and had no trust in one another. This was openly displayed and known widely by (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). When I inquired with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership, they assessed it as a problem that would not be fixed until change of command. This was disastrous for the crew because most of the problems resulting from the adversarial attitude were felt by the crew. This affected planning and execution of many key events and other items requiring coordination between (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) did a decent job of mitigating the effects, but it was still untenable. I commenced working on this problem during turnover by re-establishing a personal relationship with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) who I knew during previous tours. While the actions I initiated would prove beneficial at some point, the inability of the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to work together professionally during the previous year led to impacts that I did not fully foresee and still exist today. Again, I cannot overstate the repercussions of their poor relationships or (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and the fact that it was allowed to exist for a long period of time.

b. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) assembly that occurred in July 2017. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) directed a critique and critique report be completed based on discussions with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). Requirement was pointed out to my predecessor multiple times by (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) leadership for at least the month leading up to change of command and nothing was completed. This resulted in valuable time devoted during AHPTP to complete work from months before, and it was perceived as the new CO levying a requirement as opposed to the reality of poor follow through by previous leader and lack of adequate oversight.

c. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Report for an event in July 2017 was not signed and submitted until after change of command.

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d. Two required Quality Assurance critique reports were not submitted for events in June-July 2017. This once again required additional work by multiple crew members and me to adequately understand and document the past events.

e. Lack of adequate preparations for shipboard (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Inspection (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) that was scheduled more than a month in advance for the week following change of command. The poor performance on (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and overall ship's (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) program records required significant upgrade during AHPTP.

f. Overall Supply records and programs were below standards due to long standing problems. This was a known issue throughout the ERP, and likely longer, and little was directed by my predecessor and other ship leaders to correct the problems. These were (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) problems and the Supply Departments were not working well together as previously discussed.

g. Lack of adequate preparations for the Supply Management Inspection (SMI) that was scheduled more than two months in advance for approximately 10 days after change of command. Significant problems identified during SMI were at a minimum partially avoidable with better preparation, coordination with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and command oversight during the months prior to inspection.

h. No formal plan for managing manning during the AHPTP and upcoming deployments. Numerous manning challenges existed including planned losses during the AHPTP with no replacements identified. My predecessor and other senior leaders did not adjust any planning for crew PRDs based on lengthy extension of the ERP. This resulted in significant losses coming during AHPTP and probable inability to man a deployed watch bill with qualified and proficient watch standers

i. No formal tracking of manning at the divisional and departmental level. All of this was being tracked by the LYN with ad hoc oversight by the XO and COB. This exacerbated the lack of formal plan for managing manning.

j. A significant number of recent and pending unplanned losses were affecting numerous divisions. This included several Chief Petty Officers that were still attached to the crew, but not medically fit to be at-sea. No plan was established to account for these unplanned losses in the near or mid-term.

k. The Command Career Counselor programs were not fully functional. This included not providing formal reports to the chain of command for the required and essential information regarding the professional status and development of the crew. There were no documented Career Review Boards (CRB) at any level for at least one year before change of command.

l. Wardroom planning and qualifications were unsatisfactory at best as discussed below.

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(1) In the months before change of command, my predecessor put a plan in-place to rotate the three Junior Officers with the most seniority during the September to December timeframe. One of these officers was well short of average tour length and two of the three lacked adequate sea time for professional development due to spending most of their tour in the ERP with no ride aboard another ship. This starved the Junior Officers of essential professional development that would come with the AHPTP and deployment. It also adversely affected deployment manning for Officers of the Deck (OOD) and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Managers with some experience. The less senior Junior Officers also did not get to benefit from the experienced Junior Officers. My predecessor did not discuss this plan with me before establishing with PERS (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) informing the Junior Officers. I did delay one of the Junior Officers until January 2018, but I did not keep him for deployment based on not wanting to break trust with him and his wife.

(2) All officers significantly behind in qualifications with no established plan to regain the necessary path to qualifying on-time.

(3) Average timeframes for qualification as OOD, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) manager (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), Ship's Duty Officer (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and other qualifications were significantly longer than average. Some of the qualifications were taking 2-3 times longer than expected. This appeared to be an accepted practice as there was no discernable repercussion or plan to correct.

(4) No plan established for sending the recently reported Junior Officers for rides on other ships despite knowing that the only sea time that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) would have in at least six months was 2-3 weeks of sea trials and post sea trials.

(5) No rigor applied to the plans given to the Junior Officers that did ride other ships in the previous year. This resulted in them not achieving an adequate level of qualification during the precious sea time.

(6) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) program onboard was inadequate. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) did not take any ownership for this program and the Senior Watch Officer thought it was managed by the XO and CO. The result was no formal preparation leading up to attending the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) school and a basic misunderstanding of the importance of the program throughout the wardroom. The officer most impacted by the lack of a formal program was scheduled to start (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) immediately after change of command and after his 24 month point onboard. He was not fully prepared due to giving no attention to this vital program before going to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) school and failed on his first attempt. I worked deliberately with him during the preparation for his second attempt and he passed with a good performance. The officers were also attending (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) significantly later than the average timeframe and this was a large impact during AHPTP when I was required to send four officers to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in order to makeup for inadequate past planning.

(7) Proficiency demonstrated at-sea during sea trials and post sea trials was very low. The assessment provided to me by the XO, COB and Department Heads included the belief that the

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Basic HPTP was ineffective due to low training density and relatively low level of difficulty. I note that the focus during the Basic HPTP appeared to be getting the ship through the ERP by aiding (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

(8) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Team and Department Heads did not appear to be adequately aiding in the professional development of the Junior Officers and applying rigor to their qualification planning and execution.

m. Standing plans for deployed operations had not been reviewed and revised for a long period of time. In some cases, the standing plans were more than three years old. These standing plans were essential to completion of AHPTP and deployment. This was consistent with an overall lack of mission planning for deployed operations. This required immediate and substantial work during the first few weeks following change of command to bring the mission planning and standing plans up to current guidance and ready for use in the AHPTP.

n. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) qualifications were languishing with the majority of personnel behind in qualifications and many beyond their time limits requiring notification off the ship. These notifications had not been made and no plan was in-place to improve qualifications. There was no adequate reporting of qualification status to the chain of command.

o. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Department qualifications were significantly behind schedule and more than 75% of qualified watch standers took greater than the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) allotted timeframes for qualification. This was evident in Condition I and II watch stations. There was no formal reporting of qualification status to the chain of command on a routine basis. I could discern no measurable concern for the tardiness in qualifications and no plan was in-place to change this status (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was not fully implemented and being used as required.

p. Forward watch station qualifications were even further behind schedule than (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Again, there was no sense of urgency to improve progress and set standards to enforce with the Sailors. There was no formal evaluation or reporting of qualification status.

q. Sponsor and Welcome Aboard program for new Sailors under orders to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was dormant or not effective. As an example, I did not receive any correspondence from the ship until I engaged them. As I checked aboard, it was apparent that this was not an anomaly as many new Sailors were not properly contacted and sponsored in their time leading up to reporting aboard.

r. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) programs were satisfactory, but lacked tangible involvement by senior leaders outside of monthly destructions.

s. The Operational Safety Officer (OSO) was not fully implemented onboard and involvement in operational planning and other aspects of ship's operations was ineffectual. My predecessor expressed a lack of support for this program requirement.

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t. Ship's safety program and safety council were dormant.

u. Despite the important AHPTP commencing one week after change of command, there was not an established plan for the AHPTP. This is normally completed months in advance and reviewed by (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). This resulted in last minute planning and significant time dedicated during the week leading up to and after change of command. This also required asking for late changes to the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) schedule and impact on (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) who adequately planned. There was clearly no command emphasis placed on the AHPTP prior to September 017.

v. Similar to the lack of AHPTP planning, there were no established long and short range training plans across all departments and divisions. The XO stated that other events did not allow adequate time to complete these, but did not know why the normal programmatic nature of building these plans at the department level did not occur. The XO stated that the previous CO was not interested in looking at these and placed no emphasis on them despite the previous training period having already expired. The lack of routine programs operating efficiently was evident throughout the majority of programs onboard.

w. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) programs were mostly dormant. The only department that had a functional (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) program was (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and it was months behind. The Navigation/Operations, Weapons and Supply Department programs were essentially non-existent.

x. The OPREP program records were not complete, not auditable, and lacked discernable organization.

y. The Quality Assurance program required great improvement as the records were incomplete and lacked rigor. This appeared to be a relatively long-standing problem that involved (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). I took this head-on at a planning level during AHPTP and used the Weapons Officer (prior (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) for oversight during the extended Voyage Repair Period in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c).

z. My 30 minute review of the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) during turnover yielded three pages of deficiencies that were mostly at a basic level of understanding and program management. I provided these to the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) for his action, but was concerned at the time by his lack of initiative to correct in a timely manner. This later proved to be standard for his approach to most of his assigned responsibilities.

9. Another area of concern that I had during turnover and immediately following change of command in September 2017 was the lack of command sponsored events and involvement of the crew members in external events together. There appeared to be somewhat of an apathy towards these types of events and in general towards showing pride in ship (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and Navy. I

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discussed this with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) XO, COB, Department Heads, and Department Chiefs. The consensus was that this was a recent development due to how hard the crew had been working while competing the ERP and sea trials. I warned them not to necessarily take the easy explanation and believe that the crew would automatically rebound to their prior levels of participation in these types of events. We would need to deliberately reinvigorate this early in the AHPTP. Specific examples for this area of concern are discussed below.

a. The Family Readiness Group (FRG) had been informally disbanded due to in-fighting and lack of participation. My predecessor told me it was out of his hands and the COB was managing the issue. The COB informed me that he and the XO recommended formally (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) disbanded the FRG immediately following change of command. He stated that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) had done what they could to resolve problems with the FRG and this was the best course of action. It was obvious that they wanted me to complete an action that my predecessor would not deal with during the previous months. I supported their plan with the guidance that we must reinvigorate family member participation in events and work towards potentially re-establishing a FRG, an action that my wife intended to support.

b. Although there were no problems routinely displayed overtly by crew members, there was much less camaraderie within the crew compared to the ships I previously served.

c. There appeared to be an unwillingness to participate in almost any form of ship sponsored events. These were considered mandatory fun and would only lengthen their time at work. This included a lack of command sponsored events involving the crew and family members.

d. There were no established intramural sports teams within the command. This was the first command that I had been associated with that distinction. I have always found that participation in these sports teams and similar groups by all levels of the command are healthy expressions of camaraderie and team work.

e. Crew member re-enlistments, retirements, and similar events were not routinely conducted with the crew present. In fact, the exact opposite was the normal occurrence in which only small groups might participate in the important events. This manner of minimally supporting important career events appeared to be supported by many leaders within the command.

10. The August 2018 Command Investigation report (references (a) and (b)) discusses a lack of work to improve the command climate onboard. As evidenced in this statement, I personally directed, and the leadership team enacted numerous activities and guidance to improve crew morale. As discussed, the low crew morale that is highlighted existed well before I relieved as CO, and yet this was not emphasized by any of the supervisors during turnover, nor by the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) during any meetings while I was a PCO or immediately following change of command. There is no tangible evidence that anything was being done about the low crew morale during the ERP. In fact, it appears only that it was made worse by the circumstances and lack of action by leaders and any external organization that may have witnessed. Only after I assumed command

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did we start making changes to improve this vital area. Key points related to command climate are discussed below.

a. We administered the post change of command Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey in December 2017, approximately two months after change of command. I worked closely with the Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) Manager, senior leaders, and an action team to develop the command selected questions to include in the survey. I stressed this vital survey multiple times with supervisors and at all-hands events to attempt gaining a high percentage of participation. When the participation level was reported to me as low by the CMEO Manager, I directed the survey be maintained open for an additional two weeks and again emphasized participation to the supervisors and crew. Unfortunately, the participation level was only 45% and was indicative of a crew that believed the previous leadership had not acted on the prior survey earlier in 2017. The DEOMI Survey report was dissected by the CMEO Manager, command team, and other supervisors. Additionally, focus teams comprised of personnel across all ranks and demographics led discussions to provide more detail for areas of concern and required actions. The CMEO Manager also discussed the Survey with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) CMEO to gain feedback. The CMEO Manager, XO, COB, and other senior leaders believed that many of the answers and comments on the survey were in response to conditions during the ERP instead of the two months of AHPTP already completed in which 2 weeks were a stand down. I cautioned these leaders to not assume that to be fact and, more importantly, take action even if the comments are from a year ago because they are still relevant. I signed out a required summary and provided a copy to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and followed up with the leadership regarding our actions. I was provided no feedback or questions from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). We made the results of the survey available for all-hands and emphasized the actions being taken to combat evaluated weaknesses. We also planned to conduct a Cultural Workshop in 2018 after deployment. During CO call events in the following months, I asked about whether actions being taken were effective and received positive feedback. I include the DEOMI summary from our brief as enclosure (1), which also shows a comparison to the prior survey completed earlier in 2017.

b. When I relieved in command, I asked the supervisors to act on a specific weakness that I observed. This was concerning the gratuitous use of foul language and some sexual innuendo in comments by supervisors and the crew. In past commands, I have found this to be problematic due to the poor environment that it establishes and the lack of respect it shows for the sensibility of individuals. I emphasized to the command team, supervisors, and entire crew that I expected them to always be respectful of others in all areas, including the use of foul language and sexual innuendo. I also emphasized this during check-in with each newly reporting Sailor. Any (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Sailor will know that this was a strong point from me and I saw significant improvement in this area, especially as I saw the crew correcting themselves and others. I also asked the external organizations interacting with my crew to adhere to the same and corrected them as needed.

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c. The CMEO Manager (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was recommended by the COB to relieve the previous Manager in November 2017. We believed she was well suited to the role based on previous experience, knowledge, and desire to perform in the role. In retrospect, she may have had limitations based on her busy schedule for Supply Department work, qualifications, and an introverted personality. I always felt that I could trust the CMEO Manager to discuss events with me and provide good input.

d. The Command Investigation report states that I dismissed the results of the December 2017 DEOMI Survey. As discussed above, this was not how I approached the results. When questioned during the Command Investigation, my comment was regarding how supervisors were characterizing some of the results as being based on ERP conditions. Again, I cautioned them on this belief and we took action based on the results presented.

e. I did not prevent the CMEO Manager, or any other supervisor, from attending relevant events such as XO Inquiries, Captain's Masts, or Career Review Boards (CRB).

11. The August 2018 Command Investigation report alleges there were consistent crew morale problems and misconduct occurring throughout my time as CO. I acknowledge that we were working on numerous command climate issues and correcting poor conduct by crew members as required. If the situation was as dire as projected, then I believe that one of many external organizations that were observing us throughout the period would have brought this to the command team's attention. We were almost constantly observed from the time after change of command until August 2018. I had never experienced as much constant contact with my ISIC and other external organizations. I always was provided written and/or oral comments following observed periods. I typically asked for feedback on areas such as crew performance and crew morale. Almost universally the feedback involved that the crew was working hard, displayed enthusiasm, command had a good training environment in which crew wanted to learn and improved, and morale was good. Another consistent comment was that senior leaders, including myself, were too involved in areas where it should be handled at a lower level. We assessed this was mostly attributable to the crew's low proficiency, lack of experience, and lack of underway time. Some of the opportunities when external observations observed are discussed below.

a. Multiple AHPTP events during October 2017 to April 2018. These included all aspects of operations and multiple training venues at TTF, Pre-deployment building and other locations. Observers included senior leaders and staff from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

b. Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) Assessment in late 2017 and early 2018. This involved assessors from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

c. Command Training Evaluation in March-April 2018. This involved senior leaders and staff from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

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d. In-port phase of Combat Readiness Evaluation in March 2018. This involved CRE Team and senior leaders from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

e. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) aboard (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in January 2018. This involved senior leaders and staff from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

f. Throughout the VRP in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (April – July 2018) there were representatives from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) including senior leaders and other staff. We were never without an external organization representative. We also had supervisor (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) onboard throughout. Numerous evaluations were conducted during this period by the external organizations

g. During the underway period from July to August 2018, we were joined by teams from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) also conducted an (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in August 2018.

12. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) list onboard the ship was a significant event during our deployed operations. The handling of this list should have been more comprehensive and deliberate. The actions taken by me and others were always with the best intention of the entire crew in mind. We were not trying to harm anyone and in fact we were attempting to determine the offender(s) and prevent perpetuating harm on others.

a. The person(s) who (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) were guilty of misconduct. They deserve the full measure of punishment. They deserve to be admonished rather than admonishing the personnel that were attempting to determine the offender(s) and aid the crew.

b. I put too much weight on the opinion of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

c. I exhausted the capabilities of the onboard technical authority to find an electronic fingerprint for the offender(s).

d. I did not push harder with the CMEO Manager regarding required actions for the list even without a known perpetrator.

e. I did inform a squadron senior representative, but I should have informed other persons in the chain of command.

f. The completion of the extensive EDG repairs and the need to get the ship underway after significant delays were factors in the deliberate actions taken to respond to the generation of the list.

13. Contrary to the discussion in the Command Investigation report and DFC request, there were a significant number of improvements in key aspects of crew operations across the board. Many of these came as a result of my direction or based on my asking the senior leaders to take a closer

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look at programs. I remain proud of the manner in which most of the leaders and crew took this tasking onboard and made substantive and meaningful changes.

a. Our People Centered Ranking showed significant improvement from September 2017 to July 2018. While we did not use these rankings as the focus for improvement, there were several (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) that we focused on that positively affected this ranking. We achieved the upper portion of the middle 1/3 for (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) despite our overall score being held down by a very high number of unplanned losses (UPL) which are maintained in the ranking as a rolling 12 month total.

b. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) qualification program was formalized, and I placed my personal emphasis on this key aspect of professional development. We implemented reasonable qualification timeframes that took into account crew employment and invigorated control of this qualification at the divisional level. We also inserted more involvement from the qualified Sailors daily. We formally tracked and reported qualification status with plans for those that were behind in qualifications. We also resurrected school of the boat for related professional development. By June 2018 we were able to (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) for the first time in several years.

c. Re-established wardroom planning by the XO and Department Heads developing an effective plan for division officer assignments, collateral duties, schools, and projected rotation dates (PRD). We conducted a (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) wardroom planning tele-conference shortly after change of command and another before deployment.

d. Reset Officer qualification timeframes based on the upcoming AHPTP and deployment schedule. Sent several Junior Officers on essential rides with other ships for initial and follow-on qualifications. We balanced this with AHPTP events and Junior Officer school attendance. I gave emphasis to Department Head command qualifications and all three made significant progress with the Navigator complete, Weapons Officer greater than 90%, and the new Engineer greater than 25%. Four of five Junior Officers rotating to shore duty signed nuclear COBO contracts to complete a Department Head tour.

e. Established a (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) program for preparing and tracking progress for this vital professional development. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) owns the day-to-day operation of the program while the Senior Watch Officer and XO provide oversight. I received routine updates and provided interviews at an assigned rate for those attending (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) school and those in preparation period between (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) qualification and starting the school.

f. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) qualifications were dramatically improved for initial and senior in-rate watch stations. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was fully implemented and utilized for planning and tracking. Department leaders formally assisted and tracked the qualifications to completion. The (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) were required to discuss qualifications that were at-risk with the command team. During October and November 2017, I

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determined that the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was unable or unwilling to complete the responsibilities of his critical role. I counseled him often regarding the many weaknesses that existed in his department's performance and records. He was relieved in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2018 and his successor was significantly better in executing his senior role. That said, the department was fighting an uphill battle based on the significant deficiencies resulting from neglect and lack of senior oversight during ERP. I devoted a large amount of time to work with the old and new (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) during AHPTP in order to establish a baseline of standards and diligence. We would continue to work through this during the VRP because many of the Sailors had never been held to the correct standard during operations on the ship.

g. Mission planning and standing plans were fully reviewed and revised to support AHPTP, (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and deployed operations.

h. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) trained supervisor qualifications improved from 40% of eligible qualified in September 2017 to more than 70% of eligible qualified in August 2018.

i. Forward watch station qualifications were improved by nearly 100% as the initial and follow-on qualifications flourished. This allowed flexibility for at-sea operations and unexpected losses of qualified watch standers. More importantly it provided professional development an ownership needed for the Sailors.

j. (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) programs for all departments were reorganized and updated. By May 2018, all programs were accurate and the required changes to critical publications completed. The tracking records were easy to review and accurate, as noted by the CRE team and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in August 2018.

k. Supply Department operations were vastly improved as noted by (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Supply feedback. I worked with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) worked closely on all aspects of their operations, providing support (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Routine required correspondence was maintained 100% through August 2018 and programs were operating smoothly, including (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and high priority requisition tracking.

l. Command Career Counselor programs were fully overhauled and brought in-line with requirements. Most importantly, the functions of the program were aligned to the professional development needs of the Sailors. Career Development Boards were conducted for all Sailors at the divisional, departmental and command levels. The number of personnel re-enlisting or standing by to re-enlist as of August 2018 was markedly higher than in August 2017.

m. The Sponsor and Welcome Aboard programs were re-invigorated and reorganized. I appointed a Chief Petty Officer to provide direct oversight and challenged the officers and chiefs to maintain the quality of these important programs. The feedback I received from newly reporting Sailors in mid-2018 indicated that the program was providing not just 100% contact, but also vital assistance the new Sailors before and after reporting aboard.

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n. I asked the COB, LYN and other leaders to evaluate and make changes to our check-in process for newly reporting Sailors. This was aimed at improving the value of the process while streamlining where possible. We also asked (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to do the same with their part of the check-in process to ensure vital program components were completed within the one-week timeframe.

o. We established a plan to send Sailors on rides with other ships for initial and follow-on qualifications. This resurrected a dormant program that was vitally necessary during the extended AHPTP. Again, the shift of deployment to the right resulted in seven months between the periods we owned the ship and only three weeks of at-sea time in the past 24 months. A high percentage of Sailors required at-sea watch standing to complete numerous qualifications. We balanced this with the need for watch standers in the various teams completing the AHPTP. This is the plan that should have been in-place throughout the ERP, but the previous leadership did not execute.

p. After change of command, I noted that there was no formal program in-place to aid Sailors in their preparations for advancement examinations and asked the COB and Chief Petty Officers (CPO) to establish. This supplements the in-rate training they receive during continuous training, maintenance evolutions, watch standing, and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). I believe this program paid immediate dividends as 22 Sailors were advanced on the March 2018 examination, significantly above the Navy (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) averages. We also had seven CPO selects in August 2018.

q. I worked directly with (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to correct a long standing problem with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) onboard the ship. We ensured the correct manager was assigned to oversee the program (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) established standards for completing items requiring (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) several months beyond (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). We also emphasized the importance of adhering to the requirements with all cognizant division and department leadership. The results were (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) status of greater than 99% in August 2018 and all possible items calibrated out to two months beyond the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) embraced this plan, which was 180 degrees different than before September 2017.

r. Shortly after change of command in 2017, I attended a maintenance planning meeting at (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) owned the ship. As the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) CO, I was observing status and preparations (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to deploy the ship and upcoming plans for the first (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Maintenance (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in Spring 2018. I noted that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) coded maintenance requirements (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) tracked by Performance Maintenance Team (PMT) and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) were significantly behind with many in a red status. I worked with my (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) to address this weak area. We again made a commitment to correcting this long-standing (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) weakness and (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) accepted the challenge. The result was an above average (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) completion rate by July 2018 and solid plans in-place to accomplish additional (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) during future (b)(6), (b)(7)(c).

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s. The XO and I noted that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) was not part of the potential rotation for Summer 2018 (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Operations. We discussed this with the COB and senior leaders and determined that (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) would be a good candidate especially given our recent (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) We discussed with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Operations coordinator at (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and we were added to the potential list of ships and would receive (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) if the schedule allowed. We hosted three groups of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and despite significant schedule challenges following the extended VRP, we provided them a full look at the spectrum of (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) operations in their short time aboard. The crew was very accommodating and provided the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) a good experience.

t. I asked the COB and XO to support Sailors wanting to coordinate crew events, including some with family members. Although it was slow in starting, the results were very positive, and I believe beneficial for the entire crew and family members.

(1) Christmas party in December 2017 was attended by approximately (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) Sailors, spouses and friends.

(2) Pre-deployment night in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) 2018 was attended by more than 100 spouses.

(3) Several Family Day picnics and activities were well attended in late 2017 and early 2018.

(4) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) worked to re-establish family member activities before deployment. They were successful at generating a core group (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) that wanted to promote activities during deployment and potentially re-start the FRG. These activities were beneficial during a stressful deployment, as this was the first deployment for (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and the first in more than two years for others.

(5) Several crew athletic teams competed in various intramural sports on-base and off-base.

(6) I advocated for greater involvement with the local elementary school we supported. I attended several events at the school, including delivering achievement awards and book reading. More importantly, a large number of Sailors supported these events and volunteered their hours for school projects and mentoring students.

(7) We supported the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) center for various events during and after working hours.

(8) We re-invigorated the home state program with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and locally with good crew attendance.

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(9) Numerous Sailors supported Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) activities for local students. Their volunteer hours were beneficial to the students and the community.

u. The OSO was fully implemented as an integral part of planning and execution of ship's operations. We continued to refine the use of the OSO throughout AHPTP, training during the VRP in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and underway operations for proficiency (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) and CRE.

v. Re-established the formal school program for the crew. This program was dormant for most of the ERP and no planning had been done for the AHPTP. We immediately found opportunities during AHPTP for numerous schools while balancing with AHPTP events and underway rides with other ships. Prior to deployment, we forecasted the attendance at schools for the next HPTP after deployment. We provided an opportunity for individual Sailors to inject their desired schools as for potential attendance.

w. Upgraded the ship's (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) program following the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) in October 2018. I guided the program manager through the essentials of maintaining this program and the rigor required for success. We established diver training throughout the AHPTP and performed numerous (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) regain proficiency for all (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). This was continued during the VRP in (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) with 100% proficiency and complete, auditable records.

x. Re-established the ship's Safety Council and upgraded the Safety Officer's maintenance of records.

14. The Command Investigation report discusses my behavior as CO with respect to working with the COB and XO, as well as with other senior leaders and the crew in general. The following comments provide perspective and accuracy.

a. I always used a 100% open door policy in the pre-deployment training building and onboard the ship. I encouraged any Sailor to discuss anything they would like to bring up. I promised to listen and at a minimum offer a path to address the issue they brought forth. Some officers and chiefs did not prefer my open door policy as they believed that it broke the chain of command. We kept the chain of command intact because I would not dictate anything being done without giving the issue to the cognizant supervisor(s) for action. Many Sailors took advantage of this openness to discuss issues.

b. I conducted a significant number of all-hands calls and CO's calls with smaller groups. The number of these was much more in a one year period than I have seen in my recent tours. I believe this was necessary due to the complex nature of our AHPTP and deployment schedule. There was some resistance to these events, but as a command team we believed they were vital to directly sharing information and answering questions. We also used the opportunity to recognize individuals for achievements and encouraged family members to attend during AHPTP.

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c. I used a suggestion box that allowed comments to be provided directly to me either anonymously or with attribution. I received significant feedback both positive and negative. Not all suggestions were actionable, but I would address the issue regardless. Again, some supervisors did not prefer action to be initiated by suggestion box and I always allowed the cognizant supervisor(s) to lead the evaluation and potential action.

d. The COB was particularly challenging for me. He was a second tour COB and was onboard for the entire ERP with the previous CO. By discussions with the COB, he did not appear to get along well with my predecessor and he had significant problems working with the (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). My predecessor provided me an evaluation during turnover that was less than glowing as he found him relatively ineffective. The COB also did not receive a high endorsement from (b)(6), (b)(7)(c). I maintained an open mind and worked to establish a good command team relationship, which appeared to be missing before I relieved. I believe the COB is a caring individual, who always had the best intentions for the wellbeing of the crew. He was not a deliberate command team presence and did not follow through on important actions often. The COB often seemed caught up doing busy work that belonged with a person at another level. He did not always place himself at important locations during key events and sometimes appeared surprised when I would have him be there. He did not always carry forth my guidance and vision, especially to the Chief's Quarters, even when it was clearly articulated orally or written. Th (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) discussed with me about relieving the COB prior to deployment, but I decided that continuity was needed going from AHPTP to deployment. I did agree to have the new COB relieve during deployment.

e. The XO was a hard working and caring person. He also was in-place for a large part of the ERP with the previous CO. He also appeared to have a minimal working relationship with my predecessor who clearly liked the previous XO better. My predecessor provided me an evaluation at turnover that the XO often appeared busy, but he could not determine what he was doing. My predecessor did not have him stand CDO at night during the three week underway I observed. I believed that the XO had not been given ample opportunity and needed to be embraced as a full member of the command team. I gave him more responsibilities and latitude to carry out his important role. He continued to struggle with managing the day-to-day operations in critical areas such as training and schedule. The Department Chiefs and Department Heads also were to blame in this because they have significant responsibilities in these areas. Th (b)(6), (b)(7)(c) did not provide a high evaluation of the XO despite his hard work. He was not strong tactically and it was not a natural position for him to be in front leading. This required me to often be in position of directly leading rather than providing backup in areas that he should be leading. In the end, I could not always count on the XO to provide me the required backup and proactively solve problems.

f. The Chief's Quarters were highly capable with significant experience amongst them. I gave them the latitude to run the ship in coordination with the Department Head and XO. They did not always embrace this concept and waited for direction. Many of them were hard working

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and doing everything possible for crew and mission. Collectively, they were not doing everything possible to push the priorities established and ensure the well-being of the crew. The crew believed that many of the problems associated with crew morale and dynamics emanated from the Chief's Quarters. External organizations provided the same evaluation on numerous occasions. The arrival of a new COB did appear to be making a difference in the short term.

(b)(6), (b)(7)(c)

